

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In the Final Official Action, claims 1, 3-4, 9, 13-14, 16-17, 19 and 22-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as being unpatentable over FURLONG et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0028621 A1) in view of PESSI et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0083291 A1). Claims 5 and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as being unpatentable over FURLONG in view of PESSI and LILLIE et al. (U.S. Patent Application No. 2004/0131042 A1). Claim 15 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as being unpatentable over FURLONG in view of PESSI and LEI et al. (U.S. Patent Application No. 2004/0203664 A1). Claim 18 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as being unpatentable over FURLONG in view of PESSI, and further in view of HIRI et al. (U.S. Patent No. 7,123,707 B1).

Upon entry of the amendment, claims 1, 13, 16, and 25-27 have been amended. Claims 2, 6, 8, 10-12, and 20-21 were previously cancelled. Thus, claims 1, 3-5, 7, 9, 13-19, and 22-27 are currently pending for consideration by the Examiner.

Pursuant to M.P.E.P. §714.13, Applicants contend that entry of the present amendment is appropriate because the proposed amended claims avoid the rejections set forth in the previous Official Action, resulting in the application being placed in condition for allowance, or alternatively, the revised claims place the application in better condition for purposes of appeal to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences. Accordingly, entry of the present amendment is respectfully requested.

In the Final Official Action, claims 1, 3-4, 9, 13-14, 16-17, 19 and 22-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as being unpatentable over FURLONG in view of PESSI. Applicants respectfully request that the above-cited rejection be withdrawn, since neither FURLONG,

PESSI, nor the combination thereof, disclose or render obvious at least several features explicitly recited in amended independent claims 1, 13, and 16.

For instance, amended independent claim 1 explicitly recites that *the system provides at least four different forms of processing the session request, the different forms of processing including: initiating a session by accepting the session request, rejecting a session by rejecting the session request, deferring a session by directing the session initiator to a message storage system, and engaging a session in a dynamic information collection mode, in which additional information including session subject and session urgency is dynamically collected from the session initiator through an interactive voice response conversation.*

The combination of FURLONG and PESSI do not disclose or render obvious all of the four different forms of session request processing positively recited above. More specifically, the Final Official Action asserted that the four different forms of session request processing were not inclusively claimed. As a result, the Final Official Action asserted that only one of the four different forms of session request processing were necessary to be disclosed by the combination of FURLONG and PESSI in order to render independent claim 1 obvious. The Final Official Action further asserted that the combination of FURLONG and PESSI disclosed two of the four different forms of session request processing, i.e., accepting the session request, and rejection the session request. (See Final Official Action page 3, lines 14-20, and page 11, lines 3-11.)

By asserting that the combination of FURLONG and PESSI disclosed two of the four different forms of session request processing recited in independent claim 1, the Final Official Action implicitly acknowledged that the combination of FURLONG and PESSI does not disclose the other two different forms of session request processing. More specifically, the combination of FURLONG and PESSI fails to disclose deferring a session by directing the

session initiator to a message storage system. The combination of FURLONG and PESSI also fails to disclose engaging a session in a dynamic information collection mode, in order to collect additional information through an interactive voice response conversation.

Furthermore, the combination of FURLONG and PESSI do not disclose or render obvious the feature of amended independent claim 1 that explicitly recites that *when the preferences of the session terminator are not provided by the session terminator, the system collects usage information of the session terminator and the system determines the preferences of the session terminator*. Support for this feature is at least provided in specification paragraph [0024].

Thus, for at least the reasons discussed above, amended independent claim 1 would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, in view of the combination of FURLONG and PESSI. As a result, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of amended independent claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as being unpatentable over FURLONG in view of PESSI be withdrawn. Additionally, Applicants request that the rejection of independent claims 13 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as being unpatentable over FURLONG in view of PESSI also be withdrawn, since amended independent claims 13 and 16 each recite features similar to the features discussed above regarding amended independent claim 1.

Furthermore, claims 3-5, 7, 9, 22, and 25, which depend upon amended independent claim 1, are patentable for at least the reasons discussed above regarding claim 1, and further for the additional features recited therein. Similarly, dependent claims 13-15, 23 and 26, and dependent claims 16-19, 24, and 27, are also patentable since they depend upon amended independent claims 13 and 16, respectively.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections of pending claims 1, 3-5, 7, 9, 13-19, and 22-27 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn. Applicants also request that an indication of the allowability of claims 1, 3-5, 7, 9, 13-19, and 22-27 be provided in the next Official communication.